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Letter from the Director

Last year, under the able leadership of Professor Kathleen Wellman, the Women's and Gender Studies Program reviewed, updated, and streamlined many functions and processes. My transition to a new role as Program Director was made much easier by last year's improvements. I would like to thank the Women's and Gender Studies Council, the Executive Committee, and the Dean of Dedman College, Tom DiPiero, for the time and effort they have given in support of the Women's and Gender Studies Program.

This year saw the long-awaited launch of the Women's and Gender Studies Faculty Associates Program. Professors Maxime Foerster, Beth Newman, Dayna Oscherwitz, Nia Parson, Libby Ross and Martha Satz make up the first cohort of Faculty Associates. Faculty appointed as Associates serve for three years, during which they teach one existing WGS course or develop a new one. Associates also participate in the Faculty Seminar and join the Women's and Gender Studies Council. Our new Associates bring fresh ideas and expertise. This year, Libby Ross and Maxime Foerster both developed new courses and were active participants on the Council. Additionally,



Joci Caldwell-Ryan,
Interim Director

at eventhe ts sevenl35.ousaP(y 5ual .(assthe Da)1fa2)nel with)D.008 Tw111(a)4(t . J High School in Arlington, Texas on the topic of gender and women's rights. The talk was titled "Gender and Women's Rights: Is the Gender Lens Enough?" On campus, Jessica Lott developed a workshop for the 2017 Women's Symposium titled "Can You See Me? The Politics of Body Image" (see page 4). For the third year, the WGS Program was an institutional co-sponsor for the

fault lines of Second and Third Wave feminisms. The acronym “TERF” (trans-excluding radical feminist) appears only in Rebecca Whisnant’s afterword to *E*, but Bob was challenged to explain how his position could impact those who identify as transgender. Although heated at times, the discussion was productive in unraveling the complex dynamics of the current debate surrounding the radical feminist critique of “transgenderism” and its place within broader feminist circles. It is clear that feminism(s) are alive and well at SMU!

Duke Feminist Theory Workshop

D. B. L.

Duke University’s Gender, Sexuality, and Feminist Studies Program held its [eleventh annual Feminist Theory Workshop](#), and Joci Caldwell-Ryan and I had the pleasure of being two of over two hundred attendees. (SMU has been an institutional co-sponsor for the last three years.) The workshop features four lectures by prominent scholars, who provide some of their work for us to read in advance. After hearing the four talks, we divide into smaller groups and spend some time mulling them over to find areas of overlap and difference. We then reconvene to hear a panel of three participants offer their “takes” on the talks, and to participate in a long and lively final Q & A. All of this happens over a day and a half, so the experience is intense—a



Cristina Crosby, her partner, and Beth Newman

Retired Art History Professor Turns to Murder (Writing)

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This could be the headline for a story on what this particular SMU professor emerita has been up to since retiring in 2005 from teaching classes of 150 students in Dallas Hall's hallowed auditorium. Facebook keeps them in my life and pairing fact with fiction keeps my brain sizzling. After writing eight scholarly books (one of them nominated for a National Book Award) during a long career, it has been equally stimulating and challenging to propel my pseudonymous heroine—intrepid, 80-year-old Megan Crespi—through mysterious encounters and dangerous paths. From Gustav Klimt, Egon Schiele, and Oskar Kokoschka of Vienna to Edvard Munch of Oslo, Crespi's travels take her across Europe in search of stolen artworks. And now, at last, I have had a chance to write about a artist, the great German sculptor and graphic artist, Käthe Kollwitz (1867-1945), who lost a son in World War I and a grandson in World War II. Her potent images inspire daring thefts, attract unusual characters, and lead Crespi into labyrinthine situations that somehow jell into startling denouements.



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Body Positivity at the Women's Symposium

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The SMU Women and LGBT Center hosts an annual [Women's Symposium](#). It is a day-long event featuring a luncheon, workshops, community awards, and a plenary session. This year was the 52nd annual symposium, and the theme was "My Body, Not Their Politics." The folks at the Women and LGBT center asked us at the WGS Program to put together a break-out session on body image. The WGS Program Director, Joci Caldwell-Ryan, knows that I am always happy to chat about intersections of gender, power, and bodies. My side interest (if a graduate student is allowed to have such a thing), is fat activism and fat studies. So Joci asked if I would like to lead the session, and I happily agreed. We titled the session "Can You See Me? The Politics of Body Image." Our session explored the politics of the body and our relationships to body image. Leading the session, with Joci there to assist, was a wonderful experience. We estimated around 25 would attend, but had to pull in extra chairs for a full room of 40. Attendees were mostly 46(o ha



feminist consciousness raising and encouraged attendees to build connections – with each other and to structural inequality - around common personal experiences.

I explained to the audience that how we dress is linked with how we feel and that there are many factors that influence how we dress. Everyone made a list of five things they regularly wear (e.g. clothes, makeup,



Maxime's research has been fundamentally rooted in gender issues. His first book, *D e c 'e e* (2006), examines women's rights during the French Revolution. Issues of gender, sexuality and feminism were central to his history of transsexualism in France. His dissertation at the University Michigan, *F i l i i*, analyzed dialectics of femininity and masculinity through "heterosexual trouble" in French Romantic novels. Preparing this project for publication is the focus of his current scholarship. Maxime has also developed a course with David Doyle devoted to the historical and political study of sexual minorities (lesbians, gays, transgender subjects and sex workers). Several of Maxime's classes focus on gender, including "Social Justice in 19th century French Literature," and Maxime would also like to develop a core course on literature solely written by women.



Nia's scholarship to date has focused on the gendered nature of traumatic experience and efforts at recovery, particularly intimate partner violence against women in Chile and the US. She has served on the board of the Association for Feminist Anthropology of the American Anthropological Association and the editorial board of the journal *Violence Against Women*. Her book ([Guns, Gender, and Violence in Chile](#)) and peer-reviewed articles and book chapters, all attend to gender.

Nia's courses explore the relationship between gender, violence, and human rights and make a crucial contribution to the WGST Program at SMU. Her current course, "Gender Violence: Anthropological Perspectives," is regularly offered with WGST credit. A key component of the course is the volunteer internship dimension, where students engage with community organizations focused on issues related to gender-based intimate partner violence against women.

Beth

Beth's scholarship continues to address issues of gender, as did her book ([Dolls, Dolls, Dolls: A Feminist and Psychoanalytic Approach to Victorian Fiction](#)) (2004). Her book took a feminist and psychoanalytic approach to canonical Victorian fiction and complicated the discourse about the "male gaze." Her 1996 teaching edition of [E. M. Forster](#) for Bedford/St. Martin's highlighted feminist approaches; it remains a feature in the second edition (2014). Her current scholarship, an article about the late nineteenth- early twentieth-century poet Alice Meynell, considers an essay of hers as a feminist response to one of the most famous pieces by Walter Pater. Beth is also writing about two novels by Mary Augusta Ward, a contemporary of Meynell's, as a response to both secularism and issues of sexuality. Beth teaches a number of courses for WGST: "Victorian Gender;" "Gender at the Fin de Siècle," an English course on Victorian Women Writers; and a core course, "Advanced Feminist Theory."



Dayna



Although Dayna's scholarship foregrounds race and national identity, gender is an important feature. Her earlier work on the Guadeloupean writer, Gisèle Pineau and the Cameroonian writer Calixthe Beyala, explored the intersection of gender and race in the postcolonial context. A recent book chapter on Sembène Ousmane explored the relationship between gender and genre in African cinema. An article she is currently writing looks at globalization and Jihad through three North African films to both connect these phenomena and analyze them as shaped by shifting conceptions of masculinity and femininity. Dayna is working to submit her course, "North African Cinema" (currently in the World Languages department) for WGST credit so our students can learn about issues of gender in North Africa through film and selected secondary texts, particularly as they intersect with religious and national identities. She also plans to teach our undergraduate core course, "Gender: Images and Perspectives" in the future.



Libby's research focuses on intersections of gender, race, and national and cultural identities in the work of women writers from across the Americas. Her book, _____ (2009), studied novels by women writers from the Spanish Caribbean and the U.S. South to consider how they looked at the plantation past to reimagine traditional constructions of gender, race, and nation. Her current research focuses on women writers from the Dominican Republic, especially Aída Cartagena Portalatín. Her next book will explore how recent Dominican and Dominican diaspora women writers have participated in and react against narratives of nationhood. Libby has developed a new course for WGST credit, "Women's Rights and Human Rights in Literature by Latin American Women" on Latin American women writers and hopes to teach one of our WGST core courses in the future.

Martha will continue her long association with WGST. This year alone, she is co-editing and contributing to a book entitled _____, and contributing an article on Ann Petry's _____ to an anthology *A _____: E _____ G _____, 1865-1950*. She will be a respondent in a panel on American Jewish Women Humorists at this year's Association for Jewish Studies and will present a paper on women's literature about adoption at this year's Modern Language Association. She plans to teach in the next rotation of Advanced Feminist Theory and to continue to teach two of her regular courses which are part of the WGST course listings: "Ethical implications of Children's Literature" and "Contexts of Disability." Martha's other English departmental courses

Ann Early Award Winner



The goal of my Engaged Learning proposal was to determine “What does feminism in Peru look like?”

But the longer I’m here the more I realize that this was perhaps not the correct question to ask.

There is no such thing as a “Peruvian feminism” in the same way that there is no such thing as an “American feminism” or an “Indian feminism” and so on. I cannot possibly say that Peruvian women believe this or fight for that. Peru, like any country, has an unbelievably diverse population racially, ethnically, economically, etc. And each major segment of the population (mestizo, andino, afro, etc) has its own incredibly specific history that impacts what each of these populations look like and the problems that they face today. Combine that with the fact that Peru as a whole has gone through extensive periods of terrorism, military dictatorships, power transitions, recessions, and human rights violations in its recent history (and that each of these periods

has impacted every segment of the population - albeit some more than others) and what you have is a collection of very intricate movements existing within the country.

Even in trying to categorize the different branches of feminism that exist here - popular women’s feminism, upper/middle-class mainstream feminism in wealthy areas of Lima, indigenous feminism (in the Andean region and in the rainforest), Afro-Peruvian feminism, and more - you eliminate the diversity and the voice of the subgroups that exist within each branch. In order to create momentum and strength in numbers within movements one, of course, has to acknowledge that many subgroups will be silenced. For example,



Maynard Award Winners

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The first Women and Gender Studies (WGST) class that I took at SMU was “Women in US History to 1900,” taught by Dr. Crista DeLuzio. In all honesty, I was not thrilled at the prospect of taking a class that I prematurely and wrongly judged to be a stereotypical “feminist” class. I am happy to report that by the end of my first semester at SMU, I had been transformed into a fierce and proud feminist! My first WGST class taught me the importance of learning about the achievements of women in all facets of life. The sad truth (of which I had been ignorant) is that most mainstream approaches to history had overlooked the roles and accomplishments of women.

The WGST courses at SMU have had a significant impact on my development and self-respect. Through these courses, I have learned that although history has for the most part been written by, for, and about men, the course of history would not have been the same without the influence of women. I have

become fascinated with the way academics have brought to life the previously silenced voices of women throughout history, and I love learning about the ways women have been assertive and strong, even though early historians did not document them as such. By deciding to minor in WGST, I made a conscious decision to become an agent – not a bystander – in the process of making the world more inclusive and equal. WGST has taught me new ways to interpret social, biological, economic and political culture, and most importantly, it has taught me to be an assertive and fearless woman. This education has been invaluable.

Marné’s activities include: Majors in Political Science, History, and Religious Studies; Women’s Swim Team (SMU Swimming and Diving Most Valuable Award); South African National Swim Team (2009-2017); SMU Department of Religious Studies Writing Award; Afrikaans language tutor

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What is most interesting to me about Women’s and Gender Studies is perhaps what is most commonly misunderstood – the courses are not just about the study of women’s history, feminist theory, or contemplating the issues of gender. Certainly, these topics are interesting, important, and worthwhile, but what is most intriguing to me is the intersectionality taught in these courses: the fact that what one learns in each course will carry and cross over to the other courses. I think that putting everything together is where things can

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My journey with feminism began my freshman year thanks to WGST 2322; it was here that I first learned about how language is constructed to privilege masculinity, about body positivity, about combating victim blaming, and so much more. There is power in having an academic feminist framework to analyze and deconstruct sexism, racism, and other forms of discrimination, and it is a gift I appreciate daily. It was in 2322 that I first learned about intersectionality, a concept that has proved invaluable to me in my human rights and anthropology classes. I now have the ability to consider the concept of inequality from an intersectional perspective and the tools to ask: "How does this population's gender, race, class, level of education, and more affect the problems that they face and the type of recourse that they are able to access?"

The lessons of my WGST classes can be applied to nearly every course I have ever taken – but I believe these lessons are even more applicable outside of the classroom. These lessons gave me the confidence to walk into the Women and LGBT Center my sophomore year and motivated me to become president of the Feminist Equality Movement (FEM) a year later. Every day these lessons continue to give me the confidence to fight for gender equality and speak out even when the people and institutions around me scream, "I don't want to hear it!"

My WGST classes changed the trajectory of my future and have ignited a passion within me to devote my life to fighting for women's rights. Whether you see me tomorrow or in 20 years, I will be fighting with all of my strength for gender equality, and for this confidence and passion I have the SMU WGST department to thank.

Jessica's activities include: Majors in Health and Society, Human Rights, and Pre-Medicine; President's



When I started my undergraduate studies, all I knew was that I wanted to work with kids. That was it. My psychology and sociology majors in combination with my WGST minor have led me to a goal of pursuing my LMFT license (Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist). This path will allow me to work with children and help promote healthy and functional relationships (familial, romantic, etc.) in our society. I desperately want teenagers, young adults, and people of any age, to understand what healthy relationships look like and what steps they should take if they find themselves in an unhealthy relationship. I aspire to have a positive impact on others' lives, using my experiences and past to relate to clients and help them with their personal struggles. I feel as if I am capable of helping on an even larger scale. For these reasons, I wish to pursue a Masters in Counseling and ultimately become a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist.



